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❖THE❖OLD❖TESTAMENT❖STUDENT.❖

VOL. VI.

NOVEMBER, 1886.

NO. 3.

OF the many difficulties which present themselves to the thoughtful Bible-student, no single class is more noteworthy than that class which includes the New Testament interpretations of various Old Testament passages. From the beginning of the Christian era to the present time these difficulties have been discussed. It would seem to be impossible for interpreters to agree upon any set of principles in accordance with which these "citations" might be satisfactorily explained. In this issue, our readers will find a brief statement from the well-known exegete Professor Franz Delitzsch. For the accuracy of these statements, the translator takes the responsibility. For the statements themselves, those who cannot accept them may hold the learned Professor accountable. The presentation will be found, at all events, a clear and interesting one.

OUR age is, in a peculiar sense, an age of activity. Every department of study is pushed with a vigor before unknown. Nowhere, however, is this more true than in the Old Testament and its closely allied departments.

These departments, to be sure, have to do with the past. But it is a "past" that still lives in a multitude of forms. The Old Testament world of to-day is a busy one. Discoveries are being made before which men stand aghast. Investigation is being pushed in every direction. Publications are leaving the press almost daily. The leading reviews give large space to the discussion of Old Testament topics. Semitic chairs are being established, and professors of Semitic subjects appointed in many leading institutions. All this is of interest. These details are worthy of notice. Our readers will find in

this and succeeding numbers of *THE STUDENT* a new department, *Old Testament Notes and Notices*, in which there will be chronicled, from month to month, interesting and important items relating to Old Testament work and Old Testament workers. This department, it is believed, will prove to be one of great practical value to those who are interested in this field of study.

WHY should not the study of the biblical languages be a matter of conscience to the minister of the gospel? Strictly speaking, unless he can read the Old Testament in the Hebrew and the New Testament in the Greek, his knowledge of all things pertaining to his work is second-hand. There are, of course, good translations and commentaries upon which he can depend, and for practical work this may suffice. And yet the fact remains that he himself cannot draw from the original fountain of truth or decide whether what is offered him by others is still in its original purity. The Bible being *the* source of his faith and work and inspiration should, if at all possible, be accessible to him in the very form and words in which it came from the inspired minds. Does a minister really appreciate what he does when he deliberately decides *not* to fit himself to do such work?

WE need not be surprised at the comparatively cold reception which has been accorded to the revised Old Testament by the English speaking peoples. Such a work must find its way into general acceptance gradually and upon the recognition of its merits. The fate of the German revision shows this. For, although this translation is more conservative in character than the English, its progress in the land of biblical criticism, where, of all lands, such a revision would be supposed acceptable, is even slower than that of our revision among us. Such cautious conservatism, however, is by no means an evil. If the revisions have living merits they will live; otherwise, their fate is sealed.

IF the full benefit of the study of biblical history is to be secured, it must be conducted with the proper aim and in the proper spirit. The aim should be not to acquire the facts for the sake of the facts, but to acquire them for the principles and lessons which lie behind them and which they were intended by revelation to teach. The great truths of revelation find expression not only or even principally in abstract statements, but especially, and often with wonderful clearness and emphasis, in the history of the people and of the individuals whose

life was to be the expression of these truths. God's dealings with Abraham or with David, these two best representatives of Old Testament religious life, the development of their faith and the virtues of this faith under the guidance of God, in fact their lives as a whole, teach us, when rightly apprehended, as clearly concerning the plans of God and the truths of revelation as do the more abstract and direct teachings of the sacred books. The whole history of the children of Israel is the expression of the plans of God for the unfolding of his kingdom on earth. This is much more true than that the history of the church is the expression of the New Testament ideal; for the people of the Old were to a greater extent under the direct and theocratic guidance of God, than are those of the New; and so the history of the church of the Old Covenant, i. e., Old Testament history, is for this purpose especially instructive. It is God's revelation in deeds rather than in words; and in many instances the truths underlying the former are more transparent than those expressed by the latter.

THE proposed reconstruction of Israel's history and of the development and course of Israel's religion, as is proposed by the works of Kuenen, Wellhausen, Stade, and others, aims to construct an historical and religious scheme which shall in all particulars resemble that of the religious growth of other oriental peoples. It endeavors to write a history of this religion as the result of factors and agencies such as are found in all other nations. Kuenen, the boldest of his class, states as one of the principles underlying his entire work, that the "religions of Israel and of Christianity are one of many; nothing less, but also nothing more." The aim is, therefore, to eliminate from the history of Israel the characteristic element and thus accomodate it to the general scheme of the philosophical science of Comparative Religion. This attitude of the advanced critics is the fundamental error of their whole work. It is possible that a thoroughly critical and scientific history of Israel's religious development will differ in this or that feature from the traditional views of the church. But any account of this history which proceeds from the premises that the origin, character and growth of this religion were essentially the same as those of the surrounding gentile nations, condemns itself. If there is one thought that pervades the documents from which alone an historical account of this religion can be drawn, viz., the Old Testament books, it is that the religion of Israel is the special revelation of God, the only true worship in the midst of errors; just as the God of Israel is the only true God. No possible "doctoring" of the authorities and sources can remove this feature; and since the proposed reconstruction pro-

ceeds from this violent misconstruction of the sources of this history, we may feel assured that the sober second thought of scholars will deprive the new views of the large number of adherents which thus far they seem to have secured not only in Holland and Germany, but also in England and America.

SHOULD one be inclined to think that the Old Testament contains only law and no gospel, or an insufficient amount of gospel to bring light and life to erring souls, let him read the Psalms with open eyes. The instinct of the best Christians of all ages of the church has led them to see in the Psalms the richest expressions of every phase of Christian feeling, from the deepest humiliation caused by a consciousness of sin, to the highest exaltation resulting from a recognition of blessings already given and in store for the redeemed, who are accepted by Jehovah. It is for this reason that the Psalms have always been the favorite source for Christian hymnology. The singers in Israel have drunk deep draughts at the fountain of divine mercy, and gratitude inspired them to utter that of which the heart was full. Christians in troubles, trials and temptations, find the Psalms a never-failing source of comfort; those weak in faith find strength there; those who are strong find there words and thoughts which only others equally strong were able to utter. The Psalms are replete with the gospel.

Nor is Isaiah lacking in this regard. From the fourth Christian century he is frequently called "the evangelist of the Old Testament." The name is well chosen and the honor well bestowed. An "evangelist" is one who heralds the *evangelium*, the good news concerning the salvation achieved for man. No other man in the whole pre-Christian period has done this better than has the son of Amoz. In many regards, his prophetic eye seemed brighter and more penetrating, and to him the future seemed more transparent than to his brethren; and to none other was it given to speak so clearly concerning the consummation of the plans of God and the fulfillment of his promises in the person, words and works of the Messiah. While the others speak more of the Messianic kingdom in general, Isaiah dwells more largely upon the person and the personal work of him who was to establish this kingdom. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, the central jewel in the Old Testament crown of prophecies, found in Isa. XL.-LXVI., reads not as a prediction written seven hundred years before the advent of the Nazarene, but like a historical record penned under the cross upon Calvary, and inspired by a full conception of the significance of the event.